



Volume XIX. No. 7 MELBOURNE, 1st JULY, 1936. Price-Twopence Halfpenny

The Deep Things of God.

“The spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.” —1 Cor. 2:10.

WHEN we say that a book or a thought is “deep,” we mean that its full significance does not appear on the surface ; there are parts or phases of it that lie beyond the range of our ordinary vision or comprehension. This is the case with many of the narratives and statements found in the sacred Scriptures. Take for example the Garden of Eden story.

It does not seem at first to be more than an ordinary narration of an ancient occurrence ; yet there are things in this apparently simple narrative that do not appear to the casual reader at first glance—we must study it carefully and “read between the lines.”

As we probe into the story we see inordinate ambition, the lure of increased knowledge and power, the subtle suggestion that “the end justifies the means,” the desire for self-aggrandisement on the part of Lucifer, and other factors which since that time have found an integral place in the world and its affairs. We find this time-worn tale replete with information regarding the motives that commonly underlie human action; so true indeed that it bears in itself the undeniable marks of veracity.

Another instance is the account of the birth of the Lord Jesus. Perhaps no story within the Bible seems more sweetly simple than that of the Babe of Bethlehem. To be sure, the announcement made to Mary, and the angel’s message to the shepherds and the angelic chorus, introduce the element of the supernatural; yet outside of these things, all the rest of the story appears to be easily within the comprehension of any average person. But when we look more carefully we behold much greater depths.

We see in the heavens the mighty Logos before He took upon Himself the human nature. We try to understand the meaning of His leaving the heavenly courts and coming to this earth, humbling Himself to take on the human form, bearing human infirmities, and finally dying at Calvary. To some this is an impenetrable mystery, but enlightened Bible students can solve and understand it by means of the wonder-working alchemy of divine love revealed to them. Indeed, it exemplifies the eternal love that underlies the whole plan of God, from beginning to end ; and causes our thoughts and the imagination to become “lost in wonder, love and praise.”

Love and Sacrifice.

The death of Jesus may be regarded as one of the “deep things of God.” It causes us to ask : Why should

sacrifice find so large a place in the divine scheme of things? As the mighty monarch of the universe, could not God save people without involving suffering? The answer suggests the fact that there always has been what may be termed a divine “law of necessity” operating in connection with all divine affairs. In other words, God cannot do things that are out of alignment with the principles of His own character and constitutional “modus operandi.”

God does not cause trees to grow with their roots in the air and their leaves and branches in the ground. Such an anomaly would be entirely contrary to the divinely ordained law of nature that governs all vegetational growth. We cannot annul or reverse that law, and we have no reason to believe that God will ever do so. Behind everything is an intelligent controlling principle that emanated from the Creator. The student of natural science tries to find out what this is in connection with the affairs of the natural realm; and the student of God’s Word endeavours to ascertain its function from the spiritual standpoint.

Many people say that the “law of sacrifice” simply means that it takes sacrifice to prove love and loyalty—that God requires it merely to set noble examples before others. It takes no intricate philosophy to elucidate this theory. It is not “deep,” but appreciated by the worldly, and extolled in books and the public press. Recently a story appeared in the papers of a man and a woman who had started to cross the street. An unseen car came upon them. The man could have saved himself, but he thoughtfully and nobly pushed the woman to safety and in so doing lost his own life. Then there was the young boy who carefully placed his baby brother into the hands of the fireman at the upper storey window, and then fell back into the house, overcome by the smoke and flames--though he might have saved himself at the cost of his little brother’s life.

Once in a while we hear of noble “sacrifices” of this kind, and such stories tell us that the world is not all bad, but that there are some capable of extreme unselfishness in time of peril. Such examples manifest the fact that there still lingers in humanity some of the fine qualities which God placed in man in the act of creation, and also suggest what restored man will lie like when his latent powers for good once more find development in the Millennium. But Jesus’ sacrifice was more than an example—it was vicarious. The greater the sacrifice, the greater is the degree of love revealed; and His was the greatest of all sacrifices. Therefore it is that the love of Jesus ranks so high in God’s sight. There was no pride, there was no selfishness, in His love. Verily, it was the purest of the pure.

Hidden Springs of Faith. -

One of the things that reaches down to hidden depths, and up to wondrous heights, is Christian faith. The outsider does not see the source of its supply. We remember an apt story from Bunyan’s “Pilgrim’s Progress.” While in the House of the Interpreter, Pilgrim came to a grate where a fire was burning. A certain man was pouring water on the fire; but this in nowise diminished its strength, for it flamed forth with great intensity of heat. Inquiring why this was, Pilgrim was led in behind the fireplace where he discovered a man secretly feeding the fire with oil. Then the Interpreter explained that this showed the grace of God in the heart of the Christian, and revealed the fact that he was in contact with the deep things of God which no opposition could avail to destroy. Thus real faith is ever fed by deep well-springs of truth; and at the time when it is needed it is always available.

The following story once appeared in the “New York Observer”:—“In a place where we once had our home there was a spring, famous in all the country round from the fact that it was never known to fail, or even to vary to any perceptible degree, either in volume or temperature. It bubbled up at the base of a very high mountain. And there it may be found to this day, always the same, offering to every passer-by a precious draft of clear cold water.

“Other springs dry up, and even the river becomes a poor, insignificant thing, crawling along in the

middle of its wide channel, the very shadow of its former self. But this spring—THE spring—keeps up its steady flow in defiance of the sun's withering rays and the torrid atmosphere. It seems insensible to climatic changes; to it all seasons are alike . . . neighbours have great faith in this spring. They would as soon expect the mountain to be removed as not to find it giving forth its bounteous stream. And when all other sources fail them, they feel sure. that they know one which will not deny their thirst

“What an illustration we have here of constancy --a spring that never fails. But so many professing, Christians are like mere surface springs, that are but the mere drainings of the upper soil. They give much promise in rainy seasons, and gush and flow in copious streams when the air is full of moisture and the ground is soaked with water. It is easy enough to be a spring then. But where are they when the dry season comes, when the sun is high and the ground is baked with heat? We may seek them, but alas, they are not to be found. When springs are needed most they disappear, and where their waters once flowed there is now nothing but arid sand. It is not so hard for them to keep appearances of spiritual strength in times of revival, but (during the rest of the year, under the scorn or influence of the world, under the burning heat of opposition, of fiery trial, of persecution, they dry up. How is it with us? Does love remain, giving out as before the gracious influences of truth, with a meek and lowly spirit, or does it disappear and fade away in sin and worldliness?

“Oh, how good a thing it is to be a constant Christian a Christian in all times and seasons, in public and private, in all circumstances, and conditions of life. Do you know such souls—sweet tempered, gentle, gracious souls always near to God, always with their faces shining with truth as a light from heaven ? You always know where to find them—at the foot of the cross—ready to give you, a weary, thirsty seeker, a precious draft of truth from the overflowing chalice of their own faith-filled loving hearts. And the reason why the temperature of the spring is always the same is because its sources are deep. It has its origin far down below the surface of the earth among the very foundations of the mountain (Kingdom) itself. It is not fed by the drainage of the surface, but by the ever-living rock-hewn reservoir down in the secret places of the Most High. All its constancy and sweetness and purity is owing to the fact that its sources are deep.

“Herein we have the explanation of a mystery in spiritual things. The faith that is firm and changes not to suit the fashion of the times, that soul is ever full of grace and truth, the character that is Christ-like, conforming not to the ways of the world, must have its sources deep--deep down in the bosom of the mighty rock. It is no wonder that many fail to walk as He walked, after professing faith in Christ.= because they are depending merely upon transitory emotions, upon shallow convictions and passing excitement. They cannot endure a spiritual drought, because they have no depth. They are not rooted and grounded in the truth. They have no real vital union with the only One who is able to keep them from falling, and to present them faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy.”

Understanding the Deep Things.

A thing is not necessarily hard to understand because it is “deep.” A fifty-foot well of water is no harder to understand than a ten-foot well. It is no harder to understand the ocean where it is a mile deep than where it is a hundred feet deep. When a person is a Christian for a few months he is not likely to have the depth of character that he will have after years of walking in the strait and narrow way. In the latter case he has had a greater amount of experience. He can look farther down into the depths of divine love that has followed him. But it is no harder for him to understand the mystery of life, or to appreciate the divine guidance that has directed his way.

Just as there is more water where the ocean is a mile deep than where it is a hundred feet deep, so there should be more substance in the life of the Christian who has been serving the Master for years than in him who has been in the racecourse but a few months. For the former life has been deepened, broadened

and enriched. The “deep things of

God” have become practical realities to him, for he has come to look “not at the things that are seen, but at the things that are not seen,” knowing that the “things that are seen are temporal, but the things that are not seen are eternal.”

“The spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God,” says the Apostle. The meaning of these words is evident, viz., that he who has the spirit of the Lord will search into the deep things of God the great vital things that God has set forth in His Word; things essential to salvation. and that reveal the plans, purposes and, above all, the character of God. Among these things are the divine attributes—wisdom, justice, love and power. These are all very deep. Some who are developed in love would quickly change their conditions on the earth for heavenly conditions, if they had the power. Well, God has the power, yet He allows conditions to remain as they are. Why is that? Because He has a wisdom that is very deep. His wisdom looks to the grand outcome of human affairs. He wants all creatures, “whosoever will,” to finally have the best.

Justice is deep. A sage of Israel once said, “Because divine sentence against evil work is not executed immediately, therefore the hearts of the sons of men are set in them to do evil.” Evil-doers do not recognise the working of the principle of justice; but in the age to come they will know all about it, and will wonder that they had not known it before. “An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, a life for a life.” Thus is God’s law of justice. It is mathematically exact, and it would go hard with the sinner if love had no place in the divine programme. All who appreciate justice will practise it now, and will abhor its opposite.

God’s power is “deep” in the sense that it is immeasurable. It cannot be computed in foot-pounds of energy, - it in any earthly unit of dynamic strength. It is so great that it will reject the systems of the world that have existed so long, yea, “break them in pieces like a potter’s vessel.” It will lift mankind out of the condition into which the race has fallen. It will clothe the earth in the garments of endless praise. It will break the power of sin and death, so that these shall not exist anymore forever.

Divine Love.

God’s love, manifested in His provision for the world and in His dealings with His children, is one of the deepest of all things.

“For the love of God is broader
Than the measure of man’s mind,
And the heart of the Eternal
Is most wonderfully kind.”

A poet tells of a little child who was playing on the shore of a beautiful bay along the Atlantic. He was much impressed by the white-crested waves as they rolled in toward him. When he returned to his distant inland home, he told his companions that he had seen the sea. But how much of the ocean had he actually beheld? Only the small part that lay near the shore. The vast thousands of miles of the mighty Atlantic he had not seen, nor could he imagine its scope.

Then the poet goes on to say that in like manner we say we know the love of God; and so we do. But how much of that wondrous ocean of love do we know? Only the part that we see near the shore of our present life. The mighty ocean of redeeming love lies far and wide, filling eternity and heaven and earth with its vast tide. We know it now by a brief experience; but hereafter we shall be able to explore its heights, lengths, depths and breadths for evermore.

Other Deep Things.

While the parables of Jesus are simple stories told to teach truth, there is a depth to them that calls for thought and analysis. Without giving the matter due consideration many persons take the parable of "The Rich Man and Lazarus" as a literal statement ; and by so doing they entirely miss its import. The parable of "The Sower and the Seed" also is a most comprehensive one, taking in, as it does, all those who hear the Word of Truth during this age, and setting forth their response or lack of response to the voice of God. As for the parable of "The Ten Virgins," this, too, is a wonderful story; and its complete fulfilment evidently has not yet taken place. The "Eleventh Hour" parable seems to apply to the past and present, and manifestly the last call for workers is now going forth.

The test that God applies to the Christian is full devotion to Him, and the possession of that love that "is not provoked to anger, thinketh no evil, rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth ; hopeth all things, beareth all things, believeth all things, endureth all things." Those possessing such love are the ones with whom God is most highly pleased and who will win out in the end. He lets us know "the deep things of God" for the one great purpose of deepening and enriching our characters, so that we may become more God-like. If the truth fails to accomplish this in us, then we are not using the truth as it should be used. "Sanctify them by Thy truth," prayed Jesus ; "Thy Word is truth." And Paul said, "Be ye transformed by the renewing of your minds, that ye may know what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God."

The "deep things of God" always maintain their depth. They never become shallow pools by the wayside. As we gaze far down into them, we behold the reflected stars of hope and promise, and can behold the image of the church of Christ as it struggles on and upward toward the goal held out before it. Always we catch the vision of Jesus as the great exemplar of divine love. His cross is there, too, and it glows with a celestial light as the world withdraws from us and we find ourselves more and more realising the divine presence. Ere long the veil of the flesh will be passed, and then we shall enter into His house above, there to feed more fully on "the deep things of God," with enlarged capacities to receive and appreciate them.

And how we should long to be nearer to Him now, to be enriched with the heavenly treasure ever more abundantly. At times the partition that separates us from Him and His personal presence seems very thin. But in all things we know that He is leading us, dealing with us, loving us, though still invisible to human eyes. We are glad that He is faithful, and that "none can pluck us out of our Father's hand." We want to sink so completely into His will that in all circumstances of life we can say:

"Nearer, my God, to Thee, Nearer to Thee;
E'en though it be a cross That raiseth me.
Still all my song shall be, Nearer, my God, to Thee;

Nearer to Thee."

—From "The Dawn."

"Every hour is worth at least a good thought, a good wish, a good endeavour."—Clarendon.

PEOPLES PAPER.

Published by the Berean Biblical Institute, at National Bank Chambers, 226 Glenferrie Rd.,
Hawthorn, Melbourne E 2.
(Monthly) 2/6 per annum, post paid,

While it is our intention that these columns be used for teachings strictly in accord with the Lord's Word, we cannot accept responsibility for every expression used, either in the correspondence or in the sermons reported,

A Cross (x) on the wrapper indicates that the Subscription (a) "Peoples Paper" is overdue.

Clergymen Smoking and Mawkish Hymns.

FROM Sydney comes the news that after a speaker at the Methodist Anti-Smoking League this week had declared that "three-quarters of Methodist Church ministers indulged in the vicious habit of smoking," the league decided to change its name to that of "The Christian Anti-Smoking League." . . . In contrast to other days, when the Methodist Conference is sitting at Wesley Church a "smoking room" is now provided for ministers.—Melbourne "Age," June 3rd.

SYDNEY, Friday, June 5th.--"There is a fountain filled with blood, drawn from Emanuel's veins: and sinners placed beneath that flood lose all their guilty stains."

This verse was quoted by the Rev. N. C. Goss, of the Croydon Congregational Church to-day, in support of his statement that many hymns are "pagan, gloomy, amorous or mawkish."

"That hymn is purely pagan," he said. "That's not Christianity. You find that idea in all pagan races."

—Melbourne "Herald."

The above extracts from recent press reports give further emphasis of the deplorable condition existing amongst professed ministers of the Gospel. In the first instance, how little the true Christian life is understood by the reverend gentlemen mentioned. Surely those who intelligently read their Bibles could never harmonise it life of worldly indulgence with that of the Lord's and the Apostles' they claim to follow and represent.

Our Lord's own words are, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me"; and of Himself He declared, "The foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests but the Son of Man hath not where to lay His head." (Matt. 16:24, 25; 8:20.) All the Apostles likewise set the same standard for Christian discipleship. The following are samples of the numerous quotations to be found in their writings :—"But what things were gain to me those I counted loss for Christ.. Yea, doubtless, and I count all things loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but refuse, that I may win Christ." "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." (Phil. 3:7, 8; Gal. 6:1.4.) "Love not the world, neither the things in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is, not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world." (1 John 2:15, 10.) What place then should smoking or "smoking rooms" have in the lives of those claiming to be the Lord's consecrated people?

The second statement, reported as coming from the: Rev. N. C. Goss, is even worse, as it strikes at the very foundation of the Christian's hope—"the blood of Jesus Christ (which) cleanseth, us -from all sin." (1 John 1:7.)

It is very evident that this gentleman, if he has been a Christian, now no longer has faith in the sacrifice of Christ as being necessary- for salvation from sin and death. If the words of the hymn complained of are pagan and not Christianity, as he says, there, it, is very strange that the Founder of Christianity and all His inspired Apostles, as well as the faithful prophets of all previous ages, agree in their declarations^ that "without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins." Surely the Apostle made no mistake when he declared, "Christ died for our sins according to, the Scriptures" (1 Cor. 15:3) and "Neither is, there salvation in, any other : for there is none other name (than the name of Jesus Christ) under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved" (Acts.4:12, etc.). Well would it be for church-going people generally if their leaders who now "deny the: Lord that bought them" would frankly admit that the Word of the Lord is no longer their guide and authority behind their teachings.

Surely those earnest Christians still connected with one or another of the denominations should take note of these things, and instead of trying to correct such matters within the systems, as in the case of the "Christian Anti-Smoking

League," should obey the Lord's injunction to "Come out of her, My people." (Rev. 18:4.) "Flee out of the midst of Babylon, and deliver every man his soul: be not cut off in her iniquity ; for this is the time of the Lord's' vengeance; He will render unto her a recompense . . . He would have healed Babylon, but she is- not healed : forsake her." (Jer. 51:6-0.)

"A Review of the Doctrines"

The above is the title of a little book of 92 pages written by Bro. H. J. Shearn, of England, and which makes a review of Christian doctrines in the light of "present truth."

While there are some expressions that may not be fully endorsed, we feel sure the little work will be found helpful by the brethren generally, in that it has the truths nicely assembled in the handy size.

A supply will be on hand shortly, and in the meantime all may order who desire copies of this hook. It is very neat in appearance, being bound in green cloth and can be carried in the pocket. We are not sure of the price to be charged, but it may be about 1/6 per copy, including exchange, etc., from England.,
Question Box.

Question.

Q. - In Malachi 3:5 it says the Lord will be a swift witness against extortioners and all evil-doers. If, as we are led to believe, our Lord has been present since 1874, how is it that evil-doers are worse now, if possible, than ever before?

St. Paul also says about Anti-christ “whom the Lord shall consume by the bright shining of His presence.” In the last ten years the Papacy has been getting more power, especially in England and U.S.A., and in North Queensland they control everything, the Labour Party in particular.

Answer—A careful study of the Scriptures respecting Christ’s second coming clearly reveals the fact that He comes again secretly, “as a thief in the night,” and that He will gradually reveal His presence to His faithful people. There is much to be done before He takes His throne and begins to put the world right. The parables of Matt. 25 are given to illustrate and emphasise the teachings in our Lord’s answer to the disciples’ questions of Matt. 24:3-- “When shall these things be? What shall be the sign of Thy presence (parousia) and of the end of the world (age)?” He was not again to come in human form: that could be located in a desert or secret room, but comes a glorious spirit; in the “express image of the Father’s person.” “in the glory of the Father and all the holy angels with Him.” He comes to displace Satan and his evil spirits and to reign instead; with His Bride, the Church, no more visible to mankind than has Satan been more powerful for good than Satan has been for evil.

The Parable of the Ten Virgins illustrates the necessity of watching and of having good supply of the holy spirit, and shows the testings that will separate the wise from the foolish virgins. The Parable of the Talents shows how the Lord will first reward His people according to their faithfulness in the use of their talents. ‘First; the dead in Christ shall rise, receive their rewards and “enter into the joys of their Lord.” Then those that remain in the flesh as they reach the end of their earthly course receive their rewards and are “changed in a moment” to be “with the Lord in the air.”

When all this is accomplished, when “the Bride has made herself ready,” the third Parable of the Sheep and Goats will begin to have fulfilment—the Millennial reign will commence as verse 31 says, “Then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory,” and all nations will then be dealt with. Not until the Church is complete—need we expect the fulfilment of Matt. 24:30, “Then shall all the tribes of earth mourn and they shall see (discern—realise) the Son of Man coming in the clouds (troubles) of heaven with power and great glory.”

That will be the further development in connection with Christ’s presence. That is what Paul refers to in Rom. 8:19, 20—the whole groaning creation waiting for the manifestation (revealing) of the sons of God. That is when the bright shining, “the Sun of Righteousness,” will arise and scatter all the vapours of superstition and errors and completely destroy the “man of sin,” the “mystery of iniquity” the great Papal system, the Roman Church.

It is a mistake to think that ‘because we are undoubtedly living “in the days of the Son of Man,” which correspond to “the days of Noah which were before the flood,” that the new age—the Kingdom age—has begun. No, not until the great flood came and destroyed the “old world” did this “present evil world” begin, and not until this “present evil world” (2 Peter 3) has ended in the fiery time of trouble, will the “world to come wherein dwelleth “righteousness,” begin. Then Satan and his wicked spirits will be bound and all evil restrained. No more will “the wicked prosper as a green bay tree,” but “the righteous, shalt flourish as the palm.”

No doubt all long for the Kingdom and our finite minds take small views and expect things in a hurry, but the great “Divine Plan of ‘the Ages’” progresses in stately step-pings, and even seeming delays are but working ‘out the Creator’s great’ designs.

Watching Unto Prayer.

(1 Peter 4:7. Convention Address.)

We would examine the subject of our talk we all will have vividly brought to our remembrance the many texts closely associated with this topic, and additionally the many exhortations of our Master to His church to “watch and pray.” But to introduce our subject let us read A-Peter 4:7—”But the end of all things is at hand; he ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer.” Since ,

Matter so important is enjoined on the household Of faith, it surely behoves each and all to discover for what is one to watch, and how to watch; and for what is one to pray, and how to pray.

We are fully aware that “to watch” is really to be, awake, alert, ready, closely observing, to be on guard, to be vigilant and wary. And likewise we all define prayer as desire, or to earnestly petition. One poetic phrase defines prayer as “the sincere •desire of the soul, either uttered or unexpressed.” ‘ If this be true, and we believe it is, then every human being at some time or other is in an attitude •of prayer, since prayer is desire—sincere desire. But -that is a little beside our point, for when we infer “prayer to anyone we generally associate it towards ‘Cod, as our Scriptures affirm—”Let your requests ,(desires) be made known to God.” (Phil. 4: (I.) However, we believe many are in this condition of prayer, but for some reason do not see the necessity for watchfulness, or as our text says, of sobriety- attentive to the outcome of our prayers. Here is one prayer of an earnest soul :—

A PRAYER FOR LIGHT.

“Life! great mystery! Who shall say
What need bath God of this poor clay?
Formed by His hand with potent skill
Mind, matter, soul and stubborn will;

Born but to die: sure destiny—death.
Then where, oh! where this fleeting breath”
Not one of all the countless throng,
Who lived and died and suffered long,

Returns to tell the great design
That future, which is yours and mine.
We plead, O God! for some new ray
Of light for guidance on our way;

Based not on faith, but clearer sight,
Dispelling these dark clouds of night;
This doubt, this dread, this trembling fear;
This thought that mars our blessing here.

This restless mind, with bolder sway,
Rejects the dogmas of the day
Taught by jarring sects and schools,
To fetter reason with their rules.

We seek to .know Thee as Thou art
Our place With Thee—and then the part
We play in this stupendous plan,
Creator Infinite, and man.

Lift up this veil obscuring sight;
Command again: “Let there be light!”
Reveal this secret of Thy throne;
We search in darkness the unknown.”

We wonder whether the writer of this prayer fulfilled the other portion of necessity in prayer—watchfulness. If so, we are confident that the light desired would be revealed in the “Light of the world”—Jesus. (John 1:8, 9.) The many other desires of the prayer, too, would be granted in (his time, and the “Plan of the Ages” would unfold its mysteries and treasures, and the eye of understanding would be enlightened, to know something of the unsearchable riches of Christ.

It grieves us though, that because of sleepiness, or drowsiness, many of the groaning creation have such a prayer dwelling in their hearts, and do not find the answers. How many, like the writer of the above, are thirsting for the waters of life? We do not doubt the earnestness of those who pray in such manner; we do not disbelieve that their words are the “sincere desire of the soul.” Now, as the Scriptures affirm that God is “able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think,” and our Lord commissioned us to “ask and it shall be given you; seek and ye shall find; knock and it shall be opened,” etc., if we do not realise these promises there must be something wrong, either with us or our prayers—possibly “we ask amiss.” Perhaps the fault is suggested in I John 3:22—do we keep His commandments? Do we practise those things pleasing in His sight? Surely one of His commandments was “watch and pray.”

If we are convinced that our prayers are not answered and we still grope “in darkness the unknown,” let us discover why. Perhaps the answer is delayed because we are not asking according to God’s will for our welfare, or maybe the flesh is weary, like in Gethsemane when the Apostles were asked to keep watch—how drowsy and sleepy they became. And this, we believe, is the very reason many are not partaking of God’s favour to-day they do not watch!

If we pray and do not watch, we lose the greater part of the blessing that God wishes to give, and will never know whether our prayers are heard.

Let us retrace our thoughts again to the beginning of our topic—“prayer is sincere desire.” Vain repetitions, however scripturally correct in word formation, will not avail us anything. Our prayers must be sincere desires. Could we examine, with profit, some of our prayers? We pray, “Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done”; do we watch to recognise our part in “what manner of persons we ought to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and basting unto the coming of the day of God.” It is by such observation that we discern the blessing derived from this portion of a prayer.

Briefly it means, that, if when we pray “Thy kingdom come and Thy will be done,” we are solicitous for others, and ready to help others enter that kingdom, the blessing is ours.

Two illustrations of the subject are contained in Luke 10:2 and Eph. 6:18, 19. In the former we hear the Lord soliloquising respecting the harvest, and enjoining the disciples to pray that the Lord of the harvest would send forth labourers into His vineyard. It looks on the face of it that they were telling God what to do. Having in mind the other part of our topic, of watching, we can see that the prayer was instituted on their behalf, and if they were watching unto prayer they would quickly see their part in the request they were making. It ended in a manner that showed their watchfulness, for were not these very disciples the chief instruments, or labourers, in the harvest that was then ready for reaping? Truly their watching demonstrated the sincerity of their prayer. In fact, 0, referred to, was the Apostle Paul soliciting prayers in a meditation of weakness? Or was he not rather instituting a prayer, that if really offered with sincere desire, would open the eyes of his brethren in Ephesus to observe their part in the ministry he was so privileged to bear and faithful watchers would quickly grasp the opportunity offered in cooperating, that he might indeed “make known the mystery of the Gospel”?

We pray “forgive us our trespasses,” but if we do not watch for the conditions of forgiveness, we will not know whether our faults are forgiven. We pray for a larger measure of the holy spirit, in order to be more fruitful. Failure to watch for the opportunity of being less filled with our own spirit, less filled with the spirit of the world, and less under the influence of the Adversary, would result in a prayer being unfulfilled. We pray for more peace, but if we are not awake to use profitably the peace we already possess, how can we expect to inherit more? We pray for more joy, for “love rejoiceth in the truth.” Should we still take pleasure in iniquity, is it possible to receive more- joy?

We know there has been much controversy regarding which is most essential in the development of the Christian character—character-building or doctrinal soundness. We believe that one is as essential to the “man of God” as the other; and likewise in the matter of prayer. If we do not closely observe the result of our prayers, we are wasting much time.

An illustration ‘of how needful watching is associated with prayer, was uttered at a Convention some years ago.

One Brother asked the question in regard to prayer: “Did you ever pray when trying to catch horses?” Possibly few of us have had such experience, but we can sympathise with our Brother in the difficulty of reining in some fractious animal. And so great apparently was the task that he resorted to prayer. He possibly managed the task successfully by perseverance in the right manner, and the accomplishment was due, no doubt, in no small measure to his watching. He ‘was watching in harmony with his desire, and when the favourable opportunity arose, he (lid his, part in the matter concerned.

Another instance, related in the daily press, is as follows :—A doctor was summoned to a child with a chronic illness. He was too late to save the little one. The grief-stricken mother declared, “The Lord’s will be done.” The physician commenting’ on the case declared it was neglect largely that caused the child.; sickness, so if the mother had watched regarding her obligations, probably the Lord’s will would -have been sweeter for her.

The point to ask always is, what is our part? And so, if “prayer is appointed to convey the blessings God designs to give,” let us watch for them, for do we not all know “God moves in mysterious ways His wonders to perform”?

We pray for comfort. If we use this blessing we will receive, comfort, for it is given “that we may comfort others in trouble by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.” We pray to “endure hardness,” and to be strengthened that we may wage a better warfare. Not watching unto prayer in this particular we soon would be offended because of conflicting views, or opposition from one of the many quarters that continually beset us. Sincere prayer in the request of any matter entails that we should be on watch. Are we troubled? Are we afflicted? In these matters there is much scope for growth to be made, in harmony with our prayers in which we ask for patience.

Another matter we all are concerned with is our endeavour to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. We could hardly assert our genuineness in this request if we loved rather a factious spirit, debating, or a continual stirring up of strife, striving about many words, ever learning and never able to come to a knowledge of the truth. Again, we pray and sing, “Let us pray for one another.” This prayer is without effect if we do not closely observe the opportunity for fulfilment; being asleep as regards such a request, we never would recognise an opportunity for assisting one another. A similar thought the Lord must have had in mind is recorded in Matt. 5:44. Our prayers would not be that our enemies might continue to be enemies, but watchfulness on our part would quickly discern the moment that we might be of use to assist our opposers to come to a better understanding of the Lord’s graciousness. “Oh, that men would praise the Lord for His goodness and for His wonderful works to the children of men.”

The Apostle says, “Pray without ceasing” the necessary labour in such a matter would be our watching- in the same, and grasping as we see the opportunities of bringing every desire of ours in armony -with God’s will, that we may receive the abundant entrance into the Kingdom of God’s dear Son.

Let our prayers be no “lip service” (Isa. 29:1:1), for “whosoever offereth praise glorifieth Me,” and we want the “words of our mouths and the meditations of- our hearts” to be the showing forth of the, “abundance, of the heart.” Much harm could be, done by-merely a lip service in the matter • of prayer;

harm to both the utterer and the hearer. There would be no watching on the part 'of the former, and the latter would be inclined to not recognise the genuine

when contact is made with such, associating it 'rather :with the insincerity of those who practise prayers to, be heard of men. Prayer is not a matter of eloquence, but as before stated, sincere desire.

In all and sundry who in diverse manners and various tunes pray •and desire ever so small. a blessing, even in the matter of food, let us watch to fulfil our part in the matter, and God will be quick to answer on His part. Some pray and do not watch; others watch and. do not pray.'

And in this connection, as we review our text again; we would, note in respect of "the end of all things is at hand," that many watchers see the fulfilment of Luke.21::5416. But so many ,watchers often forfeit much peace, as- our hymn puts it, and needless pain is borne because we do not take it to the Lord in prayer.

. Now, I have a secret : Some pray,. some watch and consequently receive the blessings associated in watching unto prayer. But they still- lack the chief blessing and that is that after certain requests are granted-they are not used profitably, as all bequests should. Let. us not forget the law 'of- the Kingdom"Freely-ye have received, freely give."

In conclusion,-prayer is a privilege of which God wants us to avail ourselves, not that he does not know our desire, but rather that He. wants us to watch for the answer :and-there by become familiar with.His ways and, how He deals with us, that we may be wise in His will,-both in our own-behalf and additionally for others, so- that all may "watch, and pray."

Special Book Offer

An unusual opportunity is now available for all desiring to procure new copies of "Studies in the Scriptures" in the red cloth binding at exceptionally low prices. We are able to offer as follows:—Vols. 1, 2, 3, 5; 6 at 6d. per copy; plus postage of 3d. per book for Vols.1,2, 3; 4d. for Vol. 5; and ^5d. for 'VOL 6.

In addition to the above single book rate, Vol 1, "The Divine Plan of the Ages" may be procured at. the price of 4/6 per dozen plus the postage or freight charges: These offers may appeal to Classes or individual brethren able to engage in placing them in the hands of those who will promise to read.

Tell Jesus.

“Tell Jesus when the burden seems too great for you to bear;
Go, lay it at the feet of Christ, and know that He will care;
And tell Him all the little things that come to cloud your way,
The ‘puzzles and perplexities that trouble you to-day.

“Tell Jesus all there is to tell about your daily needs,
About the .dim uncertainties through which your pathway leads:
About the cherished hopes that lie crushed lifeless at your feet,
The golden dreams left unfulfilled—the labour incomplete.

“If you could know how tenderly He makes our cares His own,
You would not stand apart again and hare the pain alone;
You would not miss the joy and peace of walking at His side,
Of finding tempest changed for calm, and sorrow sanctified.

“I tell Him all the story now—no other friend can he
In morning light or evening shade what Jesus is to me;
His gracious heart is still the same to-day as yesterday,
And in His love I fuel-my rest, and in His strength my stay.”

Regarding “Peoples Paper” Subscriptions.

With next month’s issue of the “People’s Paper” a notice will be enclosed to all readers whose subscriptions have expired, stating the date of the expiration,

This is not to be taken as indicating the intention of discontinuing the “Paper” to those whose subscriptions have lapsed, but rather of our desire to hear from all thus placed,. that we may know of their wish respecting the monthly visits of the “People’s Paper.” As mentioned in last month’s issue, all not able to provide the subscription are gladly supplied free upon request, either personally or .through other readers.

AIDS TO BIBLE STUDY.

“Divine Plan of the Ages,” blue cloth, gold lettering, 2/9 (Other editions at cheaper rates)

,”The.Plan of God—in Brief” 6d.

“Foregleams of the Golden Age,” 2/6 “Some of the Parables,” 8d, 6/6 a dozen “Hopes Beyond the Tomb,” 6d, 5/- a dozen “Where are the Dead.” 3d., 2/- dozen “Christ’s Return,” 4d, 3/- a dozen “I will Come Again,” 3d

“Spiritism,” 4d, 3/- a dozen

“Tabernacle Shadows.” 9d “God’s Covenants “ 8d.

“Mythology Explained” 3d.

“Emphatic Diaglott “ (N, T., DeLuxe only), 10/6

“God’s Beat Gift” (For Children) 1/-

Bibles, Wall Texts. Free Tracts and other Bible Helps.

BERAN BIBLICAL INSTITUTE,

226- Glenferrie Road, Hawthorn, E2, Melbourne, Vic.

Books Wanted.

Friends who have “Sermon Books” or “Berean Bible Student’s Manuals” for disposal, are asked to communicate with us.

Published by Berean Biblical Institute, National Bank Chamber Lela, Hawthorn Printed by Hickling & Powell, Brunswick Victoria.